

Claims

1. A viral vector expressing a nucleic acid encoding 5T4 antigen.

5 2. A vector according to claim 1 which is a poxvirus vector.

a 3. A vector according to claim 2 which is ~~MVA~~ *Modifed Virus Ankara (MVA)*

4. An expression vector which encodes and expresses 5T4 antigen.

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5. A modified ~~5T4~~ antigen.

Sub A1 6. A modified antigen according to claim 5, which is a peptide epitope of 5T4 antigen which induces a CTL response.

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7. A modified 5T4 antigen according to claim 6, capable of binding more efficiently to an HLA molecule than the unmodified epitope, and thus capable of inducing a more efficacious CTL response.

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8. A modified 5T4 antigen according to claim 7, selected from the group consisting of HMADMVTWL and NLLEVPADL.

Sub B3 9. A vaccine composition comprising ^a 5T4 antigen as the immunising agent.

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10. A vaccine composition according to claim 9, further comprising one or more adjuvants.

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Sub A2 11. A vaccine composition according to claim 9 or claim 10, wherein the 5T4 antigen is a modified 5T4 antigen according to any one of claims 5 to 8.

Sub B1 12. A method for eliciting an immune response in a subject, comprising the steps of immunising the subject with a 5T4 antigen.

1 13. A method for eliciting an immune response in a subject, comprising the steps of immunising the subject with a nucleic acid encoding 5T4 antigen, and expressing the 5T4 antigen in the subject.

5 14. A method according to claim 12 or claim 13, wherein the 5T4 antigen is a modified 5T4 antigen according to any one of claims 5 to 8.

10 15. A method for eliciting an immunotherapeutic response in a subject, comprising the steps of immunising the subject with a nucleic acid encoding 5T4 antigen, and expressing the 5T4 antigen in the subject

15 16. A method according to any one of claims 12 to 15 wherein the immune response is a CTL response or an antibody response.

17. Use of 5T4 antigen in the preparation of a composition for the immunotherapy of a tumour in a subject.

20 18. Use of 5T4 antigen in the preparation of a composition for the breaking of immune tolerance to 5T4 antigen in a subject.

25 19. Use of 5T4 antigen in the preparation of a composition for the sterilisation of a subject.

20 20. Use according to any one of claims 17 to 19, wherein the 5T4 antigen is delivered by means of a viral vector according to any one of claims 1 to 3.

30 21. Use according to any one of claims 17 to 20, wherein the 5T4 antigen is a modified 5T4 antigen according to any one of claims 5 to 8.

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22. A vector encoding 5T4 antigen and an agent capable of binding 5T4 fused with an immunostimulatory molecule, for separate, simultaneous separate or combined use in the treatment of tumours.

10 24. A recombinant poxvirus vector from which at least one immune evasion gene has been deleted, which comprises a nucleic acid sequence encoding a ~~tumour~~ associated antigen (TAA).

15 25. A vector according to claim 24, wherein all the immune evasion genes have been deleted.

20 26. A poxvirus vector having a reduced lytic activity, which comprises a nucleic acid sequence encoding a TAA.

25 27. A poxvirus vector having a reduced lytic activity and from which at least one immune evasion gene has been deleted, which comprises a nucleic acid sequence encoding a TAA.

30 28. A vector according to any of claims 24 to 27 which is not MVA.

29. A vector according to any one of claims 24 to 28 which is replication deficient.

31. A vector according to any one of claims 24 to 29, wherein the TAA is selected from the group consisting of melanoma-associated antigens (MAAs), melanocyte differentiation antigens such as MART-1 and gp100, MAGE-1, MAGE-3, CEA, tyrosinase, mutant ras and p53, CA-125, PSA, c-erbB2 and 5T4.

32. A vector according to claim 30, wherein the TAA is 5T4.

Sub A4

Sub A5 1
5 32. A method for eliciting an immune response in a mammal, comprising administering to the mammal a recombinant poxvirus vector according to any one of claims 24 to 31, thereby eliciting an immune response to the TAA in the mammal.

33. A method according to claim 32, wherein the immune response is a CTL response.

Sub A6 1
10 34. A method according to claim 32 or claim 33, wherein the TAA is heterologous to the mammal.

35. Use of a recombinant poxvirus vector according to any one of claims 24 to 31, to elicit an immune response in a mammal against a TAA.

15 36. Use of a recombinant poxvirus vector from which at least one immune evasion gene has been deleted, which comprises a nucleic acid sequence encoding a weak immunogen, to break immune tolerance in a mammal against the weak immunogen and elicit an immune response thereto.

20 37. Use of a professional antigen presenting cell (APC) to enhance immunity to a 5T4 antigen.

38. Use according to claim 37 wherein the APC is a dendritic cell.

25 39. Use according to claim 38 wherein the 5T4 antigen is a modified 5T4 antigen.

40. An antigen and a vector substantially as described and with reference to the accompanying Figures.

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add A1

add B1